



DNI Clapper says budget cuts would be disastrous for U.S. spy agencies

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By Mark Hosenball
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U.S. spy agencies are making preparations for potentially sweeping budget cuts that could drastically limit their ability to respond to crises, the top U.S. intelligence official said on Thursday.

In an interview, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper told Reuters that cuts required under a budget sequestration plan which Congress approved in 2011 would be the "budgetary equivalent of emergency amputations."

"It's an accurate statement to say this profoundly limits our flexibility and our ability to respond to crises," Clapper said.

Clapper is the latest in a growing roster of top Obama administration officials to declare publicly that implementation of the current sequestration legislation, which requires across-the-board budget cuts, would lead to dire consequences.

The cuts are scheduled to take effect March 1 unless Congress comes up with alternative deficit reduction measures.

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